



SAN FRANCISCO CHORAL ARTISTS

Magen Solomon, Artistic Director

and

The Whole Noyse

present

Sweet Voices & Noyses

Italian Christmas music

“The group’s unity of phrasing was especially praiseworthy, with crisp entrances and beautifully shaped lines across the program’s gamut of styles.”

– Benjamin Frandzel, San Francisco Classical Voice, June 2013

Saturday December 7, 2013, 8:00 pm

St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Avenue (at Middlefield), Palo Alto 94306

Sunday December 8, 2013, 4:00 pm

St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 114 Montecito Avenue, Oakland 94610

Saturday December 14, 2013, 8:00 pm

St. Mark’s Lutheran Church, 1111 O’Farrell Street (at Franklin), San Francisco 94109

TICKETS: \$30 at the door; discounts for advance purchase, seniors, and students.

<http://www.sfca.org> (415) 494-8149 info@sfca.org

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San Francisco, November 8, 2013—San Francisco Choral Artists, under the direction of Magen Solomon, present a program of Italian Christmas music with one of the country’s leading early wind ensembles, The Whole Noyse. The acclaimed 24-voice chamber chorus thus continues its strong tradition of unusual collaborations with instrumental

ensembles. In recent years they have shared the stage with The Alexander String Quartet and Klezmer improv trio Veretski Pass.

The Whole Noyse's name is derived from an English town band called the Norwich Waits, who in 1584 described a set of five instruments as "beeying a Whoall noyse." The ensemble performs on a wide range of historical band instruments including recorders, flutes, crumhorns, shawms, slide trumpet, and gittern, but mainly on the instruments that made up the primary professional wind group of the 16th and 17th centuries: cornetts, sackbuts (early trombones), and curtal (a bassoon ancestor).

Solomon says: "The variety of instruments they play allows for a wonderfully wide range of color, sound, and dynamics. It is very refreshing and, frankly, fun for us to collaborate with an ensemble that can inject such pizzazz. The Choral Artists can produce a stunning variety of colors, textures and dynamic, but in the end, we're still just voices. Performing with The Whole Noyse allows us to further extend that range. We collaborated with them in March 2009 and I was eager for another opportunity. Not just because of the instruments, but also because of the players' amazing knowledge of the style and repertoire of the Renaissance and Early Baroque."

The unaccompanied portion of the program showcases brilliant works by Italian composers from the 16th to 20th century, from Gesualdo's *Ave dulcissima Maria* and Gabrieli's stunning *O Jesu mi dulcissime*, to the rich and unusually chromatic *Ave Maria* by Verdi and lush *Cade la sera* by Pizzetti (a contemporary of Respighi).

True to San Francisco Choral Artists' continued support for living composers, the concerts feature three Italy-inspired world premieres by their Composer-in-Residence Benjamin Taylor and Composer-Not-in-Residence Kala Pierson. Pierson's *Sol Invictus* is a hymn to the sun, written for eight parts and set to ancient Roman texts by Varro and Minucius. "It is like a blast of sunlight, with big block chords in brilliant harmonies," says Solomon.

For *Miracle Nature*, Ben Taylor wrote a piece for men to be sung simultaneously with the women singing Palestrina's *Alma Redemptoris Mater*. Taylor's composition, for three-part men's chorus, uses fragments of the English translation of the original Latin text. Words and phrases are broken and recombined to create an intriguing palette of textures.

Taylor's second work, *The Italian Christmas Donkey*, is strikingly different: a light and humorous take on an Italian folk song. Solomon says: "Taylor is a fine tenor, has written several pieces for us in the past few years, and writes very well for voices. It will come as no surprise that in this piece the solo goes to a tenor, starring as the donkey!"

please visit www.sfca.org for biographies of SFCA, Magen Solomon, and composers Kala Pierson and Ben Taylor.

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